

Dear SIC Members and Supporters:

This issue of *SIC Clips & Quips* (Volume 5, Issue 10) is sent to call attention to information of special interest to School Improvement Councils, their members, and other stakeholders.

State House Update – The South Carolina Senate gave third reading on May 28 of its \$6 billion state budget for fiscal year 2013-14 (**H.3710**). The Senate's version of the budget sets the Base Student Cost (BSC) at \$2,101 per year (up from last year's \$2,012 but still short of the statutorily mandated amount of \$2,771). Also included in the Senate's budget is the creation and funding of the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) within the College of Education at the University of South Carolina. The CEP will roll up all Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds allocated to the programs under its purview (including SC-SIC). The Senate's budget (approved 34-7) was returned to the House with amendments. The House will now take up these amendments, with any differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget to be ironed out in conference committee.

During the Senate's budget debate last week, several budget provisos of note were adopted. Approved by voice vote was **Amendment 137F**, which would establish a tuition tax credit program for exceptional needs students to attend private schools. Tax credits would be up to \$10,000 or the amount a person, partnership or corporation owes in taxes (whichever is less) for donations made to nonprofit scholarship funding organizations that give disabled students tuition grants of up to \$10,000 to attend private schools. The total amount in tax credits allowed by the state under the plan would be capped at \$5 million. Also adopted by voice vote was **Amendment 140**, which would allow private school teachers to claim an income tax credit up to \$275 or the actual cost (whichever is less) for funds spent on teacher supplies and materials. The estimated fiscal impact to the state budget for this amendment is \$1.3 million.

You are encouraged to visit www.statehouse.gov to learn more about bills in which you may be interested. While there you can visit the "Citizen's Interest" page and sign to receive email alerts about specific bills and committee meetings that you wish to monitor. The SC-SIC staff is always willing to help you learn how to be an active participant in education policy issues. Please contact us if your district would like to schedule advocacy training for School Improvement Council members.

Have You Uploaded Your 2013 SIC Report to the Parents? – All SICs statewide should have already issued their annual *SIC Reports to the Parents* by **April 30th** as required by South Carolina statute. Guidelines on content and examples of *Reports to the Parents* are available for review on the SC-SIC website, <http://sic.sc.gov>. In addition to producing hard copies of these *Reports* for the school community, SC-SIC asks all local Councils to post an electronic version of their *Reports* on their school websites. SICs have been asked to submit (by **June 1st**) electronic copies of their *Reports* directly to the SC-SIC office the online upload tool on the SC-SIC Member Network. SIC Chairs and principals are asked to check the "Member Network" to see if their *Reports* have been posted online. If not, they're asked to accomplish this as soon as possible. Have questions or need assistance? Contact SC-SIC Digital and Web Director Claudia Wolverton at wolverto@mailbox.sc.edu.

SC-SIC Member Network Reset for 2013-14 School Year – The online SC-SIC Member Network will be reset on **July 1st** to enable local SICs to begin reporting their membership information for the 2013-14 school year. Those accessing the Network (whether logging on as a designated user or using the "read-only" function) after that date will note membership information for 2012-13 has been highlighted. While the statutory deadline for reporting SIC membership information is not until **November 15th**, designated Member Network users may begin entering their SIC's information immediately if the SIC has conducted spring elections and have the information ready to go. Account users will have to update their log-in and password information for the new school year. Directions for this are available on the SC-SIC Member Network site accessible through <http://sic.sc.gov> or by contacting SC-SIC Public Information Director Claudia Wolverton by email at wolverto@mailbox.sc.edu. Also, if your school is a new or re-organized school not listed in the SC-SIC Member Network, email Ms. Wolverton to assist you in getting your SIC established in the database.

SC-EPFP Now Accepting Applications for 2013-14 – The SC Education Policy Fellowship Program (SC-EPFP) – a 10-month professional development program for established and emerging leaders in education and related fields designed to work toward the implementation of sound education policy and practice in South Carolina – is now accepting applications **through July 15, 2013** for the 2013-14 academic year. SC-EPFP operates under the auspices of the national Education Policy Fellowship Program (<http://epfp.iel.org>) of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) in Washington, DC, which oversees Fellowship programs in 12 states and the District of Columbia. In South Carolina the program is coordinated by the SC School Improvement Council, located in the University of South Carolina's College of Education, with the assistance of the SC Department of Education's Office of Leader Effectiveness. SC-EPFP meets monthly September through June (primarily in Columbia) for a full day of dialogues, interactive exercises, small group projects, book discussions, and more. An overnight Leadership Forum is scheduled in the Fall and a four-day Washington Policy Seminar hosted by the Institute for Educational Leadership is held in the nation's capital in April. Educators may qualify for recertification or certificate renewal credits, and graduate credits may also be available. For more on the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program, including additional program information, application materials and tuition costs, visit the SC-EPFP page online at <http://sic.sc.gov/sceducationpolicyfellowshipprogram/Pages/index.aspx>. Additionally, EPFP graduates and other senior-level professionals are invited to apply to become Global Education Policy Fellows through the national Institute for Educational Leadership. More on the Global Education Policy Fellowship program can be found online at http://epfp.iel.org/?GEFPF_Apply.

SC-SIC Board of Trustees Seeks Nominations – The SC School Improvement Council Board of Trustees is a body composed of up to 21 individuals from every region of South Carolina which serves in an advisory capacity to the SC-SIC office and staff. Board members are elected to three-year terms; vacancies for unexpired terms are appointed by the Board Chair. The Board will be conducting its annual elections in July for the Class of 2016, and seeks individuals willing to serve and assist the work of SC-SIC statewide. Current members of the Board represent a variety of personal and professional backgrounds (parents, educators, current SIC members, school board members, former legislators, and more), and the Board strives to maintain its diversity. This year, the Board is particularly looking for representatives from the Upstate (Abbeville, Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg, Union) and the CSRA (Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell, Edgefield, Hampton, Saluda) regions. If you know someone who has a demonstrated commitment to public education in their particular sphere of influence, or if you yourself are interested in serving on the SC-SIC Board, nominate that person or self-nominate for consideration for Board membership. Send a resume and letter of interest to SC-SIC Associate Director Tom F. Hudson at HUDSONTF@mailbox.sc.edu, **before June 15, 2013**. More information on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees can be found on at <http://sic.sc.gov>.

Remember, *SIC Clips & Quips* is sent to all SIC members and supporters who share their email addresses with us. Please feel free to print out and share this information with fellow SIC members who may not have received it. We are here to help you, so please contact us any time!

Tom

Tom F. Hudson

Associate Director

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"Civic Engagement in Public Education"

